United Nations E/2005/34 (Part I)–E/ICEF/2005/5 (Part I)

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 February 2005

Original: English

Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2005

(17-20 and 24 January 2005)*

* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on its first regular session (17-20 and 24 January 2005). The report on the annual session (6-10 June 2005) and the second regular session (26-30 September 2005) will be issued as parts II and III, respectively. These reports will be issued in final form as *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 14* (E/2005/34/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2005/5/Rev.1).

05-23188 (E) 030305

Contents

			Paragraphs	*Page*
I.	Organization of the session		1 – 7	3
	A.	Election of officers	1	3
	B.	Opening statements	2 – 5	3
	C.	Adoption of the agenda	6 – 7	3
II.	Deliberations of the Executive Board		8 – 80	4
	A.	Briefing on the UNICEF response to the Indian Ocean earthquake/tsunami disaster	8 – 11	4
	B.	Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council	12 – 24	4
	C.	Approval of revised country programme documents	25 – 26	6
	D.	Girls' education: oral report	27 – 32	7
	E.	Immunization "plus": oral report	33 – 36	8
	F.	Global Immunization Vision and Strategy: oral report	37 – 39	9
	G.	Staff security: oral report	40 – 44	10
	H.	Follow-up to Executive Board decision 2004/8 on joint programming	45 – 48	10
	I.	Private Sector Division: work plan and proposed budget for 2005	49 – 52	11
	J.	Financial report and audited financial statements for 2002-2003 and the report of the Board of Auditors	53 – 58	12
	K.	Pledging event	59 – 60	12
	L.	Other matters	61 – 77	13
	M.	Closing of the session	78 – 80	16
III.	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board			17

I. Organization of the session

A. Election of officers

1. The Executive Board elected as President H.E. Mr. Mehdi Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran), and as Vice-Presidents H.E. Mr. Paul Badji (Senegal), Mr. Uladzimir A. Gerus (Belarus), Ms. Romy Tincopa (Peru) and Ms. Unni Rambøll (Norway).

B. Opening statements

2. The Executive Board observed a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the recent natural disasters in Southeast Asia, Africa and the United States, and the children and women affected by violent conflict in war-torn parts of Africa.

3. The President said that the world faced enormous challenges affecting children, including poverty, AIDS, conflict and the critical issues of violence and exploitation. Natural disasters also affected children, as witnessed by the tsunami disaster and the Bam earthquake, which had struck one year ago. In this context and that of the Millennium Development Goals, the Board had an important agenda for the year, especially the next UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, which the Board would approve in September.

4. The Executive Director recalled that at the Board's second regular session of 2004, she had said that it was hard to imagine the sheer scale of the suffering caused by the tragedies in Beslan and Darfur. Yet, the tsunami was a "whole new order of the unimaginable". The devastation left by the tsunami underscored the growing burden that humanitarian crises placed on organizations like UNICEF. The environment in which UNICEF staff worked had become more complex, more politicized and more dangerous. UNICEF also continued to focus on such issues as protection of children in armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, gender bias, child labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Confronting threats to child survival and development remained the solemn mandate of UNICEF, and UNICEF would continue to re-invent itself as an ever more effective organization for children in a changing world.

5. The outgoing President, H.E. Lebohang Moleko (Lesotho), thanked the Executive Director for her work on behalf of children, especially in the wake of the tsunami crisis, adding that UNICEF must continue to advocate on behalf of orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS, a situation that was in itself a humanitarian crisis.

C. Adoption of the agenda

6. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2005/1) for the session, as amended.

7. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 51 observer delegations, 2 United Nations bodies, 1 intergovernmental organization, 4 National Committees for UNICEF and the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Briefing on the UNICEF response to the Indian Ocean earthquake/tsunami disaster

8. The Executive Director briefed delegates on the UNICEF response to the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. The presentation, preceded by a short film, focused on activities in the immediate relief phase. UNICEF had been able to respond rapidly largely because it had had pre-existing programmes in all affected countries. Strong United Nations country teams, coordination among agencies and the decisive leadership of affected governments helped to ensure a timely, effective response. Nevertheless, the large-scale damage had destroyed pre-positioned supplies and had hampered access. UNICEF had assumed leadership in several sectors, including water and sanitation, education and child protection. There were relatively few unaccompanied children, a fact that likely reflected a higher mortality rate among young children than was initially estimated. Reports of trafficking, though requiring vigilance, were as yet largely unsubstantiated. The recovery phase was already under way in some areas, and UNICEF had begun to plan for long-term rehabilitation.

9. Delegations congratulated UNICEF on its rapid response, saying that UNICEF had shown itself to be a credible partner in disaster relief, and the profile of the agency and its Executive Director in the immediate aftermath was to be commended. Representatives of some of the affected countries cited immunization campaigns and efforts to get children back to school. Requests were made for additional information on long-term plans. Specific concerns were expressed over issues of staffing, disbursement of non-food relief items, and child protection. Several delegations noted the need to preserve this momentum and plan early for long-term response. Some delegations outlined their respective countries' responses to the crisis, with several announcing substantial contributions to UNICEF for relief efforts.

10. Concern for separated and unaccompanied children was a near-universal theme. Speakers called repeatedly for vigilance against trafficking and exploitation and rapid registration of children, with several delegations acknowledging the effective response of UNICEF in child protection. Delegations also said that the organization's valuable experience in Afghanistan would help guide back-to-school initiatives.

11. The Executive Director acknowledged the challenge of ensuring rapid deployment of qualified staff, particularly in sectors where UNICEF was asked to play a leadership role. However, UNICEF had taken steps to facilitate adequate support for country offices. Similarly, since the movement of displaced persons is expected to create a 'second wave' of supply needs, UNICEF and its partners were doing everything possible to ensure rapid, coordinated disbursal of non-food relief items. Discussions on orphaned children were premature until detailed assessments could be completed. Accordingly, UNICEF supported the strong positions adopted by affected Governments regarding fostering and adoption standards. Of more immediate concern were the psychosocial needs of affected populations, an immensely complex problem with long-term implications. UNICEF had been coordinating with its partners to ensure an effective response. The Executive Director assured delegations that planning for the future had already begun in earnest. Long-term responses to the tsunami crisis would be built into country programmes, utilizing the opportunity not only to rebuild what had been destroyed but to improve upon what existed before.

B. Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council

12. The Executive Board had before it the annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (E/2005/6-E/ICEF/2005/3) and a note by the secretariat on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit of interest to UNICEF (E/ICEF/2005/4), both of which were introduced by the Director, United Nations Affairs and External Relations. The Director also provided a briefing on events since the document was finalized, including the adoption of General Assembly resolution

59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The resolution reaffirmed progress made to date and provided guidance for building on previous actions. The Assembly had decided to hold a High-level Plenary Meeting on progress made in implementing the Millennium Declaration and the Secretary-General had presented the report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. Implementation of the resolution as well as decisions to be taken by the intergovernmental machinery would be handled in a coordinated manner within the context of the workplan of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Executive Committee and guidance provided by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

13. Regarding the proposal for joint office models for Cape Verde and the Maldives discussed in the report, he said that because of the recent tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean area, the Maldives would no longer be part of the exercise. UNICEF would propose to UNDG Executive Committee partners that the regional teams of the UNDG select a replacement and/or additional countries.

14. A number of delegations said that the report was comprehensive, concise and thought provoking. A few asked that in its next report, UNICEF strengthen the focus on analysis, including challenges. Delegates congratulated UNICEF for integrating commitments made at the Special Session on Children into national plans. A number of speakers commended UNICEF for its responsiveness to the needs of women and children, especially following the tsunami disaster, including mobilization of resources and provision of immediate relief to the affected populations.

15. Delegations noted progress towards the reform agenda, especially efforts to improve country-level delivery, and urged UNICEF to pay special attention to such challenges as building local capacities for addressing child protection issues and translating human rights principles and tools into concrete programming instruments. They welcomed progress made in bringing cohesion to the functioning of the system at the country level and in aligning UNICEF operations with the development agenda of the major United Nations conferences, in particular those of the Millennium Summit. Speakers urged UNICEF to continue its engagement in the development of policy frameworks and welcomed increased efforts on HIV/AIDS, and its participation in the World Bank's Fast-track Initiative in achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA).

16. Turning to the TCPR, delegations said they looked forward to the briefing during the annual meeting of the Executive Board in June, when there would be a lengthy discussion. A number of speakers stressed that capacity development and country ownership were essential in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and said that the United Nations should support national Governments in these efforts. Speakers expressed appreciation for the UNICEF commitment to the fundamental principles of operational activities, namely neutrality, multilateralism and the ability to respond to development needs of recipient countries. A number of delegations noted with concern the low number of UNICEF staff members serving as resident coordinators, and encouraged UNICEF to contribute to the strengthening of the resident coordinator system.

17. Speakers agreed with the report's findings that the involvement and coordination with regional structures should be improved to increase support for United Nations country teams and called for further harmonization of responsibilities of regional teams. They also expressed support for the need to integrate issues arising from conflicts in common country programming, an exercise that should also be carried out in countries in transition. Many delegations welcomed harmonized modalities for resource transfers, as they would reduce transaction costs for government counterparts, and also welcomed reforms being made to allow UNICEF to participate in forms of resource pooling arrangements, including sector-wide approaches to development (SWAps). Others noted the importance of maintaining clear lines of accountability and oversight through the use of transparent processes. Responding to a concern that country offices were not able to participate in

new pooled funding arrangements, the secretariat said that country offices have the necessary flexibility.

18. Concerning joint programming, some speakers said that the initiatives seeking greater coherence and streamlining of operational activities would result in lower transaction costs for national counterparts. Others said that while this was important, organizational innovations should not become a goal in themselves. There was also a need for flexibility in implementation. Application of the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) should be fully aligned with national priorities and applied only after careful analysis and dialogue with national Governments. Speakers said that the results-based matrices had improved, but more needed to be done. They also welcomed work on poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and other policy frameworks. The secretariat said that the CCA/UNDAF guidelines were open for revision based on lessons learned.

19. A number of speakers said that efforts to improve monitoring should be sustained using clearly defined and agreed indicators. Others emphasized that the development of indicators was an important and sensitive process which should be undertaken with full intergovernmental consultation and agreement. A delegation expressed satisfaction that the promotion of increased research through international scientific efforts, as well as adaptation of emerging technologies to local conditions, was one of the key outcomes of the United Nations Millennium Project. UNICEF could participate in support for global scientific research in order to address the special needs of the poor in areas related to its mandate, e.g., health and education.

20. Many delegations stressed the need to ensure children's rights. Other delegations favoured a results- or evidence-based methodology to determine programme priorities, instead of a "human-rights" based approach. They were concerned that the "rights-based" approach, while admirable, was undefined, and that the Board had a responsibility to use the MTSP as a vehicle for conveying to UNICEF a clear set of priorities and benchmarks, using the Executive Director's words, "to turn goodwill into action". One delegation expressed concern over any shift from the problems of economic growth to a human rights-based approach to programming, as this could distract from matters of development.

21. Delegates expressed the importance of having a strategy to address gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation. They welcomed UNICEF work in gender mainstreaming and stressed the importance of adopting a strategic, results-oriented and gender-sensitive approach at the country level.

22. Delegates noted the positive trend in regular resources levels over the past three years, but expressed concern over the decline in the proportion of regular resources to total resources and agreed with the report's findings that UNICEF depends on unrestricted resources for an effective global presence.

23. Speakers appreciated the strengthened cooperation with the World Bank, including through such multisectoral programmes as the Child Survival Partnership. The secretariat said that collaboration with the World Bank had intensified, as had work on PRSPs, with country teams closely involved in 30 countries and on a more limited level in 20 countries.

24. See chapter III, decision 2005/1, for the decision adopted by the Executive Board. The Board also took note of the report on the JIU.

C. Approval of revised country programme documents

25. The President said that in accordance with decision 2002/4, the Board had commented on the draft country programme documents (CPDs) and approved the aggregate indicative budgets for 22 country/area programmes at the annual and second regular sessions of 2004. The draft CPDs

were then revised, taking into account, as appropriate, comments made by delegations during that session and a summary results matrix was added. The revised CPDs were posted on the UNICEF website by 1 November 2004. Decision 2002/4 also stated that the revised CPDs were to be approved by the Executive Board at this session on a no objection basis, unless five members informed the secretariat in writing, by 10 December 2004, of their wish to bring any country programme before the Board. Because no such comments had been received, the county programmes for Angola, Burundi, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Cape Verde, the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay), Malaysia, the Philippines, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq and Guatemala were approved.

26. The representative of Burundi said that the North of his country was affected by a severe drought, and called on UNICEF and other partners to assist children affected by this calamity. The representatives of the Philippines and Serbia and Montenegro expressed appreciation for their cooperation with UNICEF. A speaker said that the revised CPD for Romania did not reflect the latest developments concerning inter-country adoption, as the country's new law had entered into force on 1 January 2005. Another delegation said that as a whole, the CPDs presented this year, many of which were based on CCAs/UNDAFs, furthered United Nations reform.

D. Girls' education: oral report

27. Following a short video clip from UNICEF India focusing on the plight of children denied access to school, the Chief of the UNICEF Education Section presented key issues, actions and impacts of the work of UNICEF in girls' education. The organization's focus on girls' education contributed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the goals of EFA and those outlined in *A World Fit for Children*, the document adopted by the General Assembly's Special Session on Children. UNICEF aimed to support access to, and completion of, quality education for all children as their basic human right and a means to leverage gains in other sectors. The presentation highlighted broad issues and challenges in the technical design of quality interventions in diverse settings; advocacy around promotion of girls' education as an entry point into EFA; resource mobilization; leadership for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI); and the prioritization of girls' education within SWAps.

28. Considerable gains have been made in education access and quality, including through the promotion of "child-friendly" schools; the creation of safe spaces and back-to-school campaigns in emergency and post-emergency settings; acceleration efforts in 25 countries at highest risk of failing to meet the gender parity goal; intersectoral approaches; and the introduction of life-skills-based education linked particularly to HIV/AIDS prevention. Intensive fund-raising efforts had mobilized significant resources from key partners, but more such efforts were required for effective UNGEI partnerships at country and regional levels. UNGEI was increasingly recognized as the main partnership framework for girls' education within EFA and the Millennium Development Goals. The way forward includes placing a greater emphasis on the UNGEI contribution to wider development processes, including a clarification of the role of UNICEF in these efforts; a reinforcement of the strategic focus of UNICEF on gender as a means of addressing rights and disparities; heightened attention to early learning; continued intersectoral collaboration; and strategic movement beyond access and gender parity issues to the challenges of quality and gender equality.

29. Many delegations acknowledged progress made in girls' education, expressing appreciation for the efforts of UNICEF and the work of the wider UNGEI partnership. Several speakers highlighted in particular the headway made in emergency and post-conflict situations. A number of delegations emphasized the importance of costing and scaling up initiatives; of applying lessons learned from experience within broader national education systems; and of mainstreaming gender in

major sectoral initiatives, highlighting the primacy of country-led strategies. In this regard, delegates asked for more information on the UNICEF role within SWAps and the EFA Fast Track Initiative (FTI).

30. Delegates expressed support for, and requested more information on, plans to strengthen the UNGEI secretariat, an effort considered vital to the role and mandate of UNICEF as a leader in girls' education, and requested further details on funding levels. The importance of advocacy and communication work around the 2005 goal of gender parity was highlighted, as was the need to improve reporting, strengthen the quality of evaluations, improve measurement of learning outcomes, and generate gender-disaggregated data. A question was raised about targets for the 25 acceleration countries. Other issues identified for further attention included water and sanitation in schools; gender-based violence; children with disabilities; and support for better teaching conditions. One delegate urged UNICEF to embrace the full set of EFA goals and to consider private and alternative education delivery systems.

31. The Chief of Education responded to some of the issues raised, noting the focus on intensified actions and the bold initiatives needed to achieve the gender parity goal in the 25 acceleration countries; reaffirming the importance of media and advocacy work as a key strategy; and underscoring the renewed sense of urgency implied in revitalizing UNGEI at the country level. He emphasized the primacy of government sector plans, noting the challenges involved in mainstreaming gender within the FTI, and emphasized that lessons learned from small-scale initiatives were being harnessed for work in scaling up.

32. The Executive Director addressed issues linked to UNGEI, highlighting its roll-out at country level and the efforts under way to strengthen the secretariat, including through the addition of two staff posts under the supervision of a Deputy Executive Director, as a means of raising its profile. Regarding the FTI, further efforts were needed to strengthen connections with the World Bank. She highlighted water and sanitation as a strategy to support work in both child survival and girls' education, the focus being on creating separate sanitation facilities for girls and promoting hygiene education that can help spread behavioural change from schools to the homes. Water and sanitation were also an important part of the organization's work in emergencies, where in several countries UNICEF is the leader among the United Nations agencies in this area. Governments remain the organization's primary partners in education, and state-provided education services were paramount. However, support was also provided to other educational actors involved in EFA, such as Koranic schools, for the establishment of a broader curriculum. Bangladesh was singled out as a country where, despite poverty, enormous commitment had spurred progress towards getting all boys and girls into school.

E. Immunization "plus": oral report

33. The Chief of the Health Section reported that the current strategies of using a mix of routine services and accelerated disease control programmes had brought significant progress, consistently benefiting about three quarters of the world's children. Still, over 30 million children – 25 million in Africa and Asia – and 40 million pregnant women were missed annually. Many countries, the majority in Africa, had made progress towards increasing routine immunization coverage in the lowest performing districts. Measles mortality in Africa had been reduced from an estimated 482,000 cases in 1999 to fewer than 240,000 in 2004. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative had seen progress in Asia but there had been set-backs in Africa. The number of deaths from maternal and neonatal tetanus declined from 248,000 in 1997 to 180,000 in 2002. Measles vaccination and vitamin A supplementation were provided in 29 countries affected by emergencies as part of the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children.

34. Immunization campaigns and related accelerated efforts had reached children in marginalized families, but at the same time had detracted attention and resources from routine immunization services. Linking immunization with other health and nutrition interventions was cost-effective and contributed significantly to achieving Millennium Development Goal 4.

35. Accurate forecasting of vaccine demand and assured longer-term funding, which allow firm contracting with an increase number of manufacturers, had contributed to global vaccine security. As a leading partner in the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the various partnerships of accelerated disease control programmes, UNICEF would continue to advocate for and support accountability-based partnerships where roles and responsibilities were clearly defined, complementary and adequately resourced.

36. Several delegations commended UNICEF for its pivotal role in strengthening immunization systems at country level and encouraged integration of immunization into the national health planning and budgeting processes. Some expressed concern that too much focus on vertical campaigns might take away attention from strengthening routine immunization and district health systems. There was also concern expressed about how child soldiers were being vaccinated, and more importantly how to prevent them from being recruited in the first place. The secretariat said that it was vital to further strengthen routine immunization with four contacts for every child, and to linking immunization to other high-impact intervention to have an even higher impact on child mortality.

F. Global Immunization Vision and Strategy: oral report

37. Deputy Executive Director Kul Gautam presented an outline of the new Global Immunization Vision and Strategies (GIVS) for 2006-2015, which had been formulated jointly by UNICEF, the World Heath Organization (WHO) and other key partners. The GIVS built on experiences in immunization in recent years and intended to provide a unified vision to guide future formulation and implementation of immunization programmes and other related interventions at all levels. Equity, gender equality, ownership and responsibility of national Governments, accountability of all stakeholders, strong district-based immunization services and sustainability through technical and financial capacity building were some of the guiding principles of the new vision and its underlying strategies.

38. The presentation highlighted the five strategic areas of the GIVS: (a) protecting more people against vaccine-preventable diseases, through an appropriate mix of routine and campaign strategies and at least four immunization contacts per year, with unprecedented attention to targeting the unreached; (b) giving a strong impetus to introducing new vaccines and technologies; (c) creating opportunities to deliver additional, high-impact public health interventions; (d) overcoming sectoral barriers by linking immunization and strengthening of health systems in such key areas such as financial and human resource planning, supply and data management; and (e) raising public awareness of global interdependence and establish accountability-based partnerships at all levels.

39. Many delegations commended the joint efforts and collaborative process between UNICEF and WHO and their partners in developing the GIVS, and encouraged further consultations with regional partners and national Governments. Speakers emphasized the need to further strengthen the strategy with respect to mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing progress, and on estimating costs, including vaccine price control and financing of vaccines. A delegation said that the GIVS was strong in terms of what needed to be done, but weak as to how to do so. Further, those in developing countries, while appreciative of the new vaccines, wanted to highlight that vaccines need to address the countries' needs, not the other way around. It was important to consider the role of market forces which could influence the introduction of the vaccines. The secretariat responded that the GIVS was a framework to guide future decisions about immunization, that costing was still

being reviewed, and that roles and responsibility of key partners would be defined in the coming months.

G. Staff security: oral report

40. The report was presented by the UNICEF Security Coordinator, who said that because the world had become more dangerous, UNICEF staff operated in many high-risk environments. United Nations staff had been murdered, kidnapped and threatened by terrorist and extremist organizations, and throughout the world staff faced being killed or injured by indiscriminate acts of violence or by crime. The past year had witnessed 153 reports of such incidents in which UNICEF staff or their immediate dependents or assets were harmed.

41. New strategies had reduced staff vulnerability and enabled safer programme activity. Designed in close partnership with the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and NGOs, those strategies included a review and enhancement of Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS), the introduction of a new threat and risk analysis model and the introduction of a security training package via CD-ROM, which has been completed by nearly every UNICEF staff member.

42. In resolution 59/276 of 23 December 2004, the General Assembly created the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), which involved the merger of UNSECOORD, the Safety and Security Service, and the field security component of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. UNICEF would interact fully with DSS, continuing to be an active member of the United Nations Security Management System. The Security Coordinator thanked the Executive Board for approving the draw-down of an additional $14 million in 2004 to allow UNICEF to achieve full global MOSS compliance. The money had been allocated, and the current status of implementation was being reviewed. In resolution 59/276, the General Assembly had decided to retain the current system of cost-sharing, which meant that UNICEF would be required to continue paying 11.6 per cent of all field and field support costs under DSS. Those security costs, amounting to over $7 million per biennium under the current system, were projected to double under DSS.

43. The Executive Director commented that while staff safety and security was one of the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children, the General Assembly's decision not to fund security entirely from the United Nations regular budget was disappointing and presented considerable difficulty. UNICEF had begun a review to identify where the extra money could come from, and the issue might have to be brought back before the Board later in the year.

44. Several delegations commended the steps taken by UNICEF to increase staff safety and security and encouraged UNICEF to develop further strategies. Strong support was expressed for the formation of DSS and the aim of developing a capacity for threat and risk analysis. However, a number of delegations expressed their disappointment in the decision to retain the cost-sharing mechanism. Asked how UNICEF would interface with DSS, the Security Coordinator replied that UNICEF would be fully integrated into DSS, playing an important part in day-to-day decision-making, most of which would be done in the field. Moreover, UNICEF had supported the formation of DSS, believing that it would enhance the safety and security of staff as well as the ability to bring health, education, equality, and protection to those most in need.

H. Follow-up to Executive Board decision 2004/8 on joint programming

45. The President reminded the delegations that in Executive Board decision 2004/8 on joint programming, adopted at the annual session of 2004, the Board took note of the secretariat's report on joint programming (E/ICEF/2004/10) and deferred a decision on the subject to the first regular session of 2005.

46. Delegations reiterated the importance of joint programming and applauded the efforts of UNICEF in this area, as it was important to United Nations reform and achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other commitments. It was also viewed as a means to avoid duplication, reduce costs, maximize synergies among agencies and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes. Most speakers, however, cautioned that the approach was not an end in itself and should be used only in cases where it was cost-efficient, where it would clearly improve development effectiveness and where each agency could reinforce the work of others. In each case, there was a need to ensure transparency and accountability. One delegation said that the approach must result in saving and improving lives.

47. A number of delegations underlined the importance of following the UNDG guidelines for joint programming and General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the TCPR. Joint programming should be tailored to each country's situation. A key challenge was how to manage funding for joint programming. It was recommended that UNICEF closely follow the UNDG guidelines. One speaker said that donor countries needed to review their reporting requirements. Another stated that the lines of budgeting, reporting and evaluation of each agency should be clear and requested more information about how the types of funding mechanisms were chosen and evaluated. One delegation noted the organization's progress in joint programming, especially in the training of staff and the dissemination of guidelines. Another delegation appreciated the rights-based approach being taken.

48. See chapter III, decision 2005/3 for the text adopted by the Board. After the adoption of the decision, a delegation, speaking on behalf of a group of States, expressed appreciation for the consensus text which reflected amendments requested by her regional group. However, the Group requested that in future, enough time be allocated for consultations between all members, and not just between the members of the Bureau.

I. Private Sector Division (PSD): work plan and proposed budget for 2005

49. The Executive Board had before it the PSD work plan and proposed budget for 2005 (E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1), which was introduced by the Director of PSD, together with highlights from the accompanying business plan for 2005-2007.

50. Delegations expressed their appreciation for the continued strong financial performance by PSD, especially in fund-raising, for the 2005 plan and for the impressive contribution targets. Delegations also commended the strong supportive role of the National Committees for UNICEF - especially their contribution to regular resources - which reflected broad support for UNICEF among the general public. The representative from the Standing Group of National Committees said that income from emergency fund-raising resulting from the tsunami crisis was the highest in the history of UNICEF.

51. PSD was encouraged to further explore new fund-raising opportunities, both in terms of geography and methodology. To a question about the decline in volume of card sales, where PSD had fallen short of its plan targets in recent years, especially in terms of sales by field offices, the Director replied that early indications showed a modest positive growth in sales volume in almost all markets for 2004. Responding to a question about an increase in marketing expenses, he explained that the overall increase in operating expenses was below the increase in revenues, although investment in marketing expenses was necessary for UNICEF to remain competitive. Nevertheless, PSD would closely watch those expenses.

52. The Executive Director added that UNICEF would carefully monitor country-based fund-raising, with a view to making this a complementary effort to programming. In response to a question about how PSD activities supported the Millennium Development Goals, she noted that overall fund-raising was critical to UNICEF efforts to achieve the Goals, and that country

programmes would benefit from the high percentage of funds going to regular resources. (See chapter III, decision 2005/2, for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.)

J. Financial report and audited financial statements for 2002-2003 and the report of the Board of Auditors

53. The Executive Board had before it the financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 Dec 2003 (A/59/5/Add.2), which was introduced by the Comptroller. The item had originally been on the agenda of the second regular session of 2004, by the Board had deferred it to the present session so that the Board could benefit from the report of the Board of Auditors and any discussions by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. The Comptroller stated that UNICEF continued to receive an unqualified audit opinion from the Board of Auditors, and that in the Fifth Committee's review of the reports concerning the funds and programmes, no issues had been raised in relation to UNICEF. He added that 35 of the 47 recommendations made in the previous report of the Board of Auditors were closed, and the remaining 12 were under implementation.

54. A speaker sought clarification with regard to General Assembly resolution 57/278 20 December 2002, which requests that governance structures, principles and accountability be examined through out the United Nations system. The Comptroller replied that the High-Level Committee on Management was addressing the issue, and UNICEF would be an active participant in the discussion.

55. Several delegation requested clarification on the efforts taken by UNICEF and PSD to ensure that contributions were received. The Comptroller replied that emphasis had been given to the matter in the last year. Documentation had been improved and the receivables outstanding for 2003 had dramatically reduced. In relation to PSD, he drew the Board's attention to the fact that an increasing receivable was an indication of increasing income.

56. A delegation asked about the circumstances within which consultants were engaged, rather than utilizing UNICEF staff, and asked why this practice had increased. A delegation asked for an explanations of the kind of obligations referred to under Statement 1, Miscellaneous Income, Note 5. The Comptroller said that he would respond bilaterally to these comments.

57. Several delegations encouraged UNICEF to implement fully all recommendations of the Board of Auditors. It was suggested that the UNICEF response to the Board, due later in the year, should prioritize the recommendations and provide a timeframe for implementation. Another speaker asked for comments on the Board of Auditors statement that the excessive expenditure during the last quarter remained an area of concern, and that the concentration of expenditure at the end of the year might indicate weaknesses in planning. The Comptroller said that management was paying special attention to the issue, adding that UNICEF tracked a normal flow of business, similar to the pattern seen in Members' own Governments. In addition, UNICEF had noted with concern the observation of the auditors concerning safeguarding of assets and was to improve its procedures for non-expendable property.

58. The Executive Director added that UNICEF took these issues very seriously. She expressed her appreciation to UNICEF staff who worked in the area of operations, saying she was very proud of the fact that in the last 10 years, UNICEF had never had a qualified audit. UNICEF appreciated that audits were used to identify areas where improvements could be made, and would continue to aim for unqualified audit reports. The Executive Board took note of the report.

K. Pledging event

59. The Executive Director opened the sixth pledging event by stating that UNICEF greatly appreciated the confidence shown it by Governments, National Committees and the private sector,

as seen in the unprecedented response to the tsunami appeal. However, that support was for other resources, and the disparity between regular and other resources continued to grow. In 2003, regular resources made up only 43 per cent of the total income. However, more Governments were recognizing the importance of core financing for UNICEF activities. In 2004, UNICEF had, for the third consecutive year, achieved an increase in the level of regular resources from Governments, with preliminary total reaching $435 million, an increase of $32 million over 2003. Contributions had been made by19 high-income, 21 middle-income and 10 low-income countries, with 15 countries having increased their contributions, 11 of them by 7 per cent or more.

60. Including pledges received prior to the pledging event, the secretariat received 50 pledges amounting to $255.7 million. Three countries provided tentative pledges for future years. One low-income country - Rwanda - pledged for the first time.

L. Other matters

Appointment of Ms. Ann Veneman as the next Executive Director of UNICEF

61. The President said that as he had informed delegations previously, he had received a letter from the Secretary-General concerning his intention to appoint Ms. Ann Veneman of the United States as the next Executive Director of UNICEF, at the conclusion of Carol Bellamy's term on 30 April 2005. After consultations with the Bureau and the regional groups, he had informed the Secretary-General of the Board's support for the appointment. The Secretary-General thanked the Board for its understanding of the situation and the support given to his decision. He and the Board welcomed and looked forward to working closely with Ms. Veneman as the new Executive Director.

Presentation on Mine Action Support Group

62. H.E. Jenö Staehelin (Switzerland), former President of the Executive Board and currently Chairman of the Mine Action Support Group (MASC), said that MASC was an informal forum composed of 27 members that met once a month to promote information exchange between donors and the United Nations about mine action activities, policy-making and funding needs. Mine-affected countries, experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were invited to report on the situation in their countries, their research activities and programmes. UNICEF also attended the meetings.

63. In the United Nations system, 10 partners were concerned with mine action, with the United Nations Mine Action Service acting as the overall coordinator. UNICEF was the focal point for improving mine awareness and mine-risk education, especially among children. UNICEF had mine action activities in 34 countries and regions. The Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World, held last October, was an opportunity to review progress in implementing the mine ban treaty and pave the way for action in the coming five years. During a field trip to Angola as chairman of MASC, he had witnessed a programme, designed by a local NGO and UNICEF, in which a group of strongly motivated young volunteers explained the risks of mines to children through a theatre performance. UNICEF played an important role in the fight against landmines, but much remained to be done, especially about the problem of unexploded ordnance (UXO). More children were now injured by UXO than by landmines.

64. A speaker said that in Africa, landmines had harmed many innocent people, especially children. Education was especially important to prevent injuries, but it was also important to combat the sale and use of these mines. Another speaker said that landmines were used irresponsibly in some parts of the world and had injured women and children. However, some countries needed mines to ensure their minimum security requirements. His own country had a long land border and was under pressure to halt drug trafficking, and landmines were a practical tool in this effort. He asked how effectively the international community had assisted mine-affected areas in mine

clearance. Ambassador Staehelin said that his personal opinion was that there was always a dilemma caused by the legitimate right to security and consequence in other areas. The problem of landmines was that most of those who suffered were civilians. The Executive Director added that 80 per cent of those wounded or killed by mines were civilians, and 20 per cent were children. Mines were even made to look like toys. She urged all countries to ratify the Ottawa Convention, because mines were not killing soldiers and drug dealers, but innocent civilians.

Presentation on UNICEF global campaign on HIV/AIDS

65. The Executive Director reported that the impact of the epidemic was huge. Although funding had increased, the response to the pandemic was massively under-resourced. While much attention was focused on orphaned children, a much larger group of children was affected, including those who were infected. UNICEF worked with all children who needed care, support and treatment.

66. The Chief of the UNICEF HIV/AIDS Section said that while some progress had been made, the disease has orphaned 12 million children in sub-Saharan Africa alone. More than 2 million children currently were infected, and 600,000 become infected each year. Untold millions of other children continued to be affected by the disease in other ways.

67. In concert with partners, UNICEF has begun work on a new campaign, "Children and AIDS", to: (a) place children at the centre of the global response; (b) improve assistance to mitigate the impact on children and secure their rights; (c) promote policies to support the response; and (d) over a six-year period, raise $1 billion to strengthen capacities for prevention, care, support and treatment for children, and scale up the response to reach a minimum of 10 million additional children. The campaign was designed to achieve a direct and measurable impact on child survival and other UNICEF priorities, especially protection, education and early childhood development. Actions would contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the targets of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS.

68. A work in progress, the campaign would include a wide range of partners, from governments and United Nations agencies to civil society and faith-based organizations. It would follow the "three ones" principles and support and accelerate the "3 x 5" initiative led by WHO, especially actions to improve treatment for children and keep parents alive.

69. A consultation with field offices and National Committees would take place in early 2005 to establish goals, mechanisms for achieving them and resource allocation. Participants would discuss how to support existing national efforts and integrate the campaign's work into the development process and initiatives. The Chief thanked the Governments of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States for pledges or contributions of funds; the National Committees for funds and leadership in helping to develop the campaign; and to the Global Partners Forum, held with the World Bank, for their assistance with building the campaign, to be launched officially in fall 2005.

Presentation on the United Nations Study on Violence against Children

70. Deputy Executive Director Rima Salah provided an overview of progress on the study, which the Secretary-General had been requested to conduct three years ago. The study aimed to: (a) gather the best information on preventing and combating violence; and (b) mobilize and expand networks to act on the study's recommendations, including strengthening the political support needed to keep children safer. The study covered all forms of physical and mental violence, injury, abuse, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

71. Led by independent expert Paulo Sergio Pinheiro and with the support of a Geneva-based secretariat, the study would focus on children as victims of violence across various settings,

including families, schools, communities, residential and care institutions, detention facilities and juvenile justice systems. Among the United Nations organizations taking part, UNICEF was focusing on violence in schools, and the International Labour Organization on working children. Research would address the particular vulnerabilities of children from migrant, indigenous, minority and other groups. The study would consider how patterns of violence were impacted by discrimination based on race, gender and HIV status. It would also review the systems, structure and social realities behind violence and make linkages to gender, poverty and globalization. Emphasis would be placed on the economic and social costs of not taking action.

72. UNICEF country offices had supported the coordination and follow-up for questionnaires sent out for the study, to which more than 80 Governments have responded. Input from NGOs was being channeled through an NGO advisory panel set up for the project. In addition, a call was made for public submission from NGOs, academics and other civil society groups.

73. In 2005, research efforts would focus on conducting regional consultations, coordinated by UNICEF, with nine scheduled for the first half of 2005. The participation of children and young people was built into the consultations.

74. Among supporters of the project, the Inter-Parliamentary Union was mobilizing assistance through its global networks, and in 2004 had helped to launch a handbook on the subject for parliamentarians. The Deputy Executive Director thanked the Governments of Belgium, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom for their support. However, additional resources were needed.

Presentation on the Second High-Level Forum on the Health Millennium Development Goals

75. Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director, said that the High-Level Forum on Health-related Millennium Development Goals, established in May 2003, aimed to provide an opportunity for candid dialogue between senior policy makers and to identify opportunities for accelerating action on the health-related Goals. The second Forum, held in Abuja, Nigeria in December, addressed five issues: a global overview of progress towards the health Goals in low and middle-income countries; a review of PRSPs and sectoral strategies and how they responded to the health Goals; the crisis of human resources in health, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa; the monitoring performance and tracking resource flows for these Goals; and the situation of the health Goals in fragile States. Much of the discussion was on Millennium Development Goal 4, the reduction of infant and under-five mortality, and concluded that the world was not on track to achieve the Goal if current trends continued, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

76. The Abuja Forum concluded with a call for access by low-income countries to critical commodities - essential drugs, bednets, anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) and vaccines - either free of charge or at affordable prices. Another topic was the crisis in Africa's health human resources: more health workers were dying than were being trained and recruited, compounded by a massive brain drain of health workers from Africa to industrialized countries, and from poorer African countries to countries like South Africa. The Government of Norway would host a meeting in February 2005 to take the issue forward in collaboration with a working group. He had proposed to the Forum the idea of a global commodity subsidy for children, to ensure that children in low-income countries received such essential life-saving commodities as insecticide-treated nets, new drugs for malaria, paediatric ARVs and certain underutilized vaccines at subsidized costs.

77. A delegation welcomed the strengthened leadership by UNICEF on the maternal and child health (MCH) Millennium Development Goals, and encouraged UNICEF in four key areas: ensuring that MCH were made explicit priorities and were fully developed and integrated within the new MTSP, and reflected in budgetary allocations; moving away from small-scale pilot intervention projects towards programmes of technical support for Governments that responded to and were lead

by national priorities and needs, while maintaining a service-delivery function in humanitarian settings; ensuring that the UNICEF agenda was harmonized within United Nations group mechanisms at country level, including the UNDG and the "three ones", in order to integrate child health priorities into wider United Nations group activities; and advocating for and fostering national government ownership of child health goals and activities, and their inclusion within national and sectoral budgeting processes.

M. Closing of the session

Tribute to Carol Bellamy

78. Delegations paid tribute to Carol Bellamy, whose second term of office expires 1 May 2005. Ms. Bellamy was hailed for her dynamism, extraordinary leadership and "unfailing commitment" to the cause of children, including her numerous travels to crisis-torn countries. Among the many accomplishments of her 10-year stewardship of UNICEF, speakers highlighted the strengthening and streamlining of emergency operations, as evidenced in the rapid response to the South Asian tsunami disaster and other crises; the placement of UNICEF at the cutting edge of global work on issues affecting children, including the challenging areas of sexual exploitation, armed conflict and HIV/AIDS; the championing of human and child rights in development; and the strong foundation laid for cooperation with other United Nations agencies, especially in emergencies and transition.

Closing statements

79. The Executive Director announced her departure at the end of April, at which time Secretary Venemen will be welcomed as the new Executive Director. Ms. Bellamy shared parting thoughts about her years at UNICEF, which began at a time when armed conflict, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS had reversed hard-won gains in health, nutrition and education and had increased poverty. Fortunately, it was also a time when the world embraced the rights of children and women, when technical breakthroughs improved programmes, and when wide-ranging partnerships strengthened the resolve and means to help children. The Millennium Development Goals and the UNICEF MTSP were vital ingredients for fulfilling the international goals and priorities for children. Ms. Bellamy thanked the Executive Board for its "unstinting leadership and support" during her tenure and expressed her gratitude for the excellent work of Youssouf Oomar, Assistant Secretary of the Executive Board, who would soon take up the post of UNICEF Representative in Côte d'Ivoire.

80. In closing, the President thanked the delegates, the Bureau and the secretariat for a highly participatory and substantive session and for their close and productive working relationships. Summarizing the key results and decisions adopted, he voiced his appreciation for the thoughtful discussions and successful pledging event. On behalf of the Board, he lauded the Executive Director for her spirited legacy of translating compassion into action and for her "tremendous skill, determination and vision" in leading UNICEF, particularly her intense engagement in the workings of the Executive Board.

III. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2005

2005/1. Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

The Executive Board

Takes note of the "Report of the Executive Director: Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/2005/3), and *requests* the secretariat to transmit it, along with a summary of the comments made during the discussion, to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2005.

First regular session
17 January 2005

2005/2. Private Sector Division work plan and proposed budget for 2005

A. Private Sector Division budgeted expenditures for the 2005 season

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* for the fiscal year 1 January to 31 December 2005 budgeted expenditures of $96.9 million as detailed below and summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1:

	(In millions of United States dollars)
Commissions – field offices	1.2
Cost of goods delivered	34.3
Marketing expenditures	25.2
Support services expenditures	19.1
Investment funds	17.1
Total expenditures, consolidated	**96.9**

2. *Authorizes* the Executive Director:

(a) To incur expenditures as summarized in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1 and to increase expenditures up to the level indicated in column III of the same table should the apparent proceeds from card and gift sales and/or fund-raising increase to the levels indicated in column III, and accordingly, to reduce expenditures below the level indicated in column II to the extent necessary, should the net proceeds decrease;

(b) To redeploy resources between the various budget lines (as detailed in paragraph 1 above) up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the amounts approved;

(c) To spend an additional amount between Executive Board sessions, when necessary, up to the amount caused by currency fluctuations, to implement the 2005 approved work plan.

B. Budgeted income for the 2005 season

The Executive Board

Notes that for the period 1 January to 31 December 2005, PSD net proceeds are budgeted at $403.0 million (regular resources) as shown in column II of table 7 to document E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1.

C. Policy issues

The Executive Board

1. *Renews* investment funds with $17.1 million established for 2005;

2. *Authorizes* the Executive Director to incur expenditures in the 2005 fiscal period related to the cost of goods delivered (production/purchase of raw materials, cards and other products) for the 2006 fiscal year up to $35.0 million as indicated in the PSD medium-term plan (see table 6 of document E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1).

D. Medium-term plan

The Executive Board

Approves the PSD medium-term plan as reflected in table 6 to document E/ICEF/2005/AB/L.1.

First regular session

18 January 2005

2005/3 Joint programming

The Executive Board,

1. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004, on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which contains the policy framework set by the General Assembly to continue strengthening the joint programming process;

2. *Reiterates* the need to maintain the institutional integrity and organizational mandate of each United Nations agency during the process of joint programming;

3. *Takes note* of the report on the assessment of the UNICEF experience of joint programming contained in document E/ICEF/2004/10;

4. *Welcomes* the efforts made to date by UNICEF in working with programme countries to maximize the impact of the particular expertise of UNICEF when strengthening jointprogramming, aimed at improving the coherence of the United Nations at field level, programming efficiency, avoiding duplication and reducing transaction costs for programme countries and thus to contribute to better overall results, and *encourages* the Executive Director to continue to work with Governments and other partners towards that end;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance that the Executive Board attaches to UNICEF using joint programming as a tool for supporting the implementation of national development plans, including Poverty Reduction Strategies where they exist, through a more concerted approach under the Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework, towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

6. *Requests,* therefore, that the Executive Director, in cooperation with the other agencies of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in implementing joint programming, ensure that joint programming, including joint programmes where appropriate, results in improved development impact, including where appropriate to:

(a) Further harmonize country programme preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes, and improve communication between United Nations agencies during the whole programme cycle;

(b) Effectively deliver programme goals and contribute to the reduction of transaction costs;

(c) Promote common monitoring and reporting processes to governing bodies and joint approaches to evaluations;

7. *Takes note* of the efforts of UNICEF in contributing to the continued development by UNDG of a common framework, to include a common reporting framework, for joint programmes aimed at improving the impact and efficiency of United Nations agencies' efforts, in partnership with and to support national Governments, including UNICEF efforts to identify circumstances under which joint programmes might be a useful tool and what improvements in development impact would be achieved via use of joint programmes;

8. *Emphasizes* the UNICEF mandate and its budgetary, financial reporting and evaluation responsibilities, including with respect to joint programmes;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on UNICEF participation in joint programming and joint programmes in her annual report to the Executive Board at the annual session of 2005, and to submit to the Board for its consideration at the annual session of 2006 a comprehensive report on the implementation of joint programming as outlined in this decision and on the UNDG Joint Programming Guidelines, including information on experiences and an analysis of resources allocated to the three options of fund management for joint programmes, and the resulting benefit in development impact or efficiency gains.

First regular session

19 January 2005